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SUBJECT: German Out-Of-Area Deployment Update

REF: Berlin 1822

¶1. (SBU) As of late October, Germany had 6,737 military personnel in out-of-area deployments, plus an additional 600 dedicated for SACEUR's Balkans Operational Reserve Force (ORF) and 3,100 for the NATO Response Force (NRF). All military out-of-area (OOA) deployments, with the exception of those in support of UN observer missions, require parliamentary approval. A law regulates the parliamentary process, allowing expedited procedures only for non-controversial deployments. What follows is a brief run-down on Germany's current OOA deployments. (Note: OOA deployments are defined as deployments outside the territory of the NATO member states. End Note.)

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)

¶2. (SBU) The Bundeswehr currently has 3,057 military personnel operating under ISAF in Afghanistan based on a one-year combined mandate approved by the Bundestag October 12. This combined mandate includes deployment of six Tornado reconnaissance aircraft, which were previously covered by a separate mandate first approved in March 2007. The troop ceiling for the combined mandate is 3,500, which is simply a merger of the previously separate troop ceilings for ISAF (3,000) and the Tornados (500). However, because the Tornados only require about 200 troops, the merger automatically creates additional headroom for Germany to take on additional tasks.

¶3. (SBU) The German government has announced its intention to use this additional troop capacity to boost the Bundeswehr's involvement in the training of the Afghan National Army (ANA). Some ideas under consideration include expanding the current drivers and mechanics school in Kabul into a logisticians' training center, cooperating with France in setting up an NCO academy in Kabul and setting up specialty military training schools in the northern region. Assuming the stand-up of a new ANA brigade in the north (scheduled for August 2008), Germany also plans to contribute four additional embedded training teams (Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams -- OMLTs). Germany currently leads one OMLT (for a maneuver battalion) and contributes to two others (for a corps HQ and a brigade HQ). Germany also plans to build garrisons for the new ANA brigade in the North.

¶4. (SBU) Germany has been active in ISAF since the operation's creation in January 2002. Germany currently commands ISAF's northern region (RC-North), where it leads two of the five Provincial Reconstruction Teams (Kunduz and Feyzabad) as well as the Forward Support Base in Mazar-E-Sharif. The ISAF mandate limits normal Bundeswehr operations to Kabul and RC-North, but allows temporary deployments to other parts of the country on a case-by-case basis. In early May, at the request of ISAF, Defense

Minister Jung approved the temporary deployment (three to four weeks) of a three-man psychological operations team to southern Afghanistan. German radio operators have also been deployed temporarily to provide communication support to Regional Command South in Kandahar. However, MOD has thus far not allowed German OMLTs to accompany their ANA units on deployments outside the north.

Meanwhile, the ISAF mandate allows the reconnaissance aircraft to operate throughout Afghanistan, but restricts the distribution of the resulting information to OEF to cases where it directly supports ISAF operations.

Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)

15. (SBU) The current parliamentary mandate for OEF, which expires November 15, allows the deployment of up to a total of 1,800 personnel. Currently, there are 246 sailors (226 in September) and one frigate under OEF, operating around the Horn of Africa. The mandate authorizes the deployment of up to 100 German Special Forces (KSK) in Afghanistan. Reportedly, no KSK have been deployed to Afghanistan under OEF in more than two years, leading some politicians to question the utility of maintaining this part of the mandate.

16. (SBU) OEF remains unpopular in Germany due to misperceptions of the mission as a strictly combat operation and its association with civilian casualties. Nevertheless, the mandate appears headed for renewal on November 15, now that the leadership of the junior party in the Grand Coalition government, the Social Democratic Party, has succeeded in rallying their members in favor of it at the October 26-28 national party conference. The government intends to reduce the overall OEF troop ceiling to 1,400 in the new mandate, but this will remain far above the actual number of troops deployed.

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17. (SBU) While the SPD party convention was supportive of OEF, it requested that the government evaluate whether OEF could be mandated through a UNSCR (rather than continuing to have it based on the self-defense provisions of Article 51 of the UN Charter). The convention also expressed the view that OEF should continue to shrink in favor of ISAF -- through, for example, the transfer of the ANA training mission to ISAF. Extension of the OEF mandate is expected to be more difficult next year, in the run-up to the 2009 national parliamentary election, given that popular support in Germany for the mission is already so low.

Kosovo Force (KFOR)

18. (SBU) Germany currently has 2,218 military personnel (compared to 2,438 in September) in KFOR, ar below that allowed under the parliamentary mandate (8,500). The mandate is extended automatcally each year unless there is a change to the UNC Resolution framework for the Kosovo Force. It remains unclear whether a new or amended parliamentary mandate will be required or requested in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence by Kosovo.

European Union Force (EUFOR) Bosnia

19. (SBU) Germany currently has 316 soldiers (compared to 483 in September) in Bosnia as part of the EU's Operation ALTHEA. The mandate, last amended December 1, allows up to 2,400 military personnel. This operation extends automatically unless there is a change to its underlying UNSC resolution. Over the last several months the German government has been slowly reducing its military presence in coordination with other allies, but that process has been suspended recently in light of current problems in implementing reform measures mandated by the Dayton Peace agreement.

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

¶10. (SBU) Germany leads UNIFIL's naval component and has 805 military personnel deployed (compared to 830 in September). The Bundestag extended the mandate on September 12 for an additional year, with a reduced troop ceiling of 1,400 (down from 2,400). The mandate authorizes the Bundeswehr to continue leading UNIFIL's naval component until February 2008.

Sudan (UNAMID, UNMIS and AMIS)

¶11. (SBU) Germany currently has 37 military observers (compared to 38 in September) in the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), monitoring the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The parliament imposed a caveat barring military observers from going to Darfur without prior consultation with the Bundestag Foreign Relations Committee's chairman and ranking members. The mandate allows the participation of up to 75 military observers. The current UNMIS mandate expires November 15, but it is expected to be extended unchanged.

¶12. (SBU) While there is parliamentary mandate for the Bundeswehr to deploy transport aircraft and up to 200 troops in support of the African (Union) Mission in Sudan (AMIS), this mandate has gone practically unused in the last year, with the AU requesting only sporadic assistance from Germany. The current six-month AMIS mandate expires December 14.

¶13. (SBU) While welcoming passage of UNSCR 1769 (which establishes the UN Assistance Mission in Darfur, UNAMID), the government has ruled out additional troops or assets for the new hybrid UN/AU force, beyond the limits in the existing UNMIS and AMIS mandates. The government has recently resisted taking on any additional military commitments in Darfur or elsewhere for fear it could undermine support for renewal of the Afghanistan (ISAF, OEF) mandates. This reluctance was demonstrated most recently in Germany's decision to forego participation in the ESDP operation in Chad. However, once the OEF mandate is safely renewed as expected in mid-November, the government may become more open to providing support for other missions. For example, given that air lift support for AMIS has been unused for a while, there might be some headroom for Germany to provide these assets. The German government is currently preparing a new mandate that would allow the Bundeswehr to shift assets currently allocated to UNMIS and AMIS to UNAMID. Approval of the mandate is expected November 15.

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Georgia (UNOMIG)

¶14. (SBU) Germany has been part of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) since 1998 and currently has 12 personnel (compared to 16 in September) stationed there, most of whom are medical personnel and military observers. To the meet a UN request for additional medical personnel, the German cabinet decided August 8 to raise the personnel ceiling for this mission from 13 to 20.

Other minor deployments

¶15. (SBU) Two military observers serve in Ethiopia and Eritrea for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). One German military observer is seconded to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The Bundeswehr has seconded 41 military personnel to Strategic Medical Evacuation (STRATAIRMEDEVAC), for which no parliamentary mandate is required, as it is not defined as an armed deployment and the aircraft are on stand-by in Germany.

Other force commitments

¶16. (SBU) The Bundeswehr currently has 600 soldiers dedicated as SACEUR's Operational Reserve Force (ORF) for the Balkans and 3,100 soldiers for the ninth rotation of the NATO Response Force (NRF).

Bundeswehr transformation

¶17. (SBU) The Bundeswehr is currently undergoing a transformation process, the goal of which is to be able to send up to 14,000 soldiers to as many as five different theaters for stabilization missions by 2010. The Bundeswehr will be reduced from its pre-transformation level of 270,000 to a final strength of 250,000 (162,300 Army, 62,700 Air Force and 25,000 Navy). The new Bundeswehr will be composed of three different groups: 35,000 for intervention forces, 70,000 for stabilization forces and 147,000 for support forces. Part of the Bundeswehr's transformation is a comprehensive rebasing program, which is also intended to be completed by 2010. Moreover, transformation includes the procurement of new equipment to fill capability gaps, mainly in the fields of strategic air lift, network centric warfare and armored vehicles. Mainly due to limited funding (Germany spends just 1.2 percent of its GDP on defense, with few prospects of significant increases in the future), the equipping side of transformation is behind schedule.

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